

# VEP NEWS

• VEP COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION •

Representing More Than 2000 Families In The Blossom Valley Area Of South San Jose Since 1969

May 2013

## VEP'S MEETING

7:30 p.m. Tuesday  
► **May 28, 2013** ◀

Vista Park Community Room  
475 Hyde Park Drive

## AGENDA

### ★ Santa Clara Water District ★ Past, Present and Future

Presentation by Director, District 4

**Linda LeZotte**

### ★ Security Patrols Program Proposal ★

for

**VEP**

Presentation by First Alarm Security & Patrol

**Teresa Larkin**  
Chief Administrative Officer

### ★ VEP Business Meeting ★

Annual Membership Business Meeting  
and Reports  
Election - Slate for Board of Directors  
Announcements & Updates  
Update on Fatal Accident on Bluefield  
VEP Summer Break  
Next Meeting September

### ★ Your Concerns and Ideas ★

Your chance to voice your opinion and/or to seek VEP's help.  
Everyone is welcome. Invite your neighbors!

## VEP's May Meeting

*by Marilyn Rodgers*

May's general membership meeting:

► **Presentations to include: Update on Santa Clara Water District; and Proposal for Security Patrols for VEP Neighborhood.** The first guest speaker will be **Linda LeZotte, District 4 Director for the Santa Clara Water District Board of Directors.** Ms. LeZotte will give a brief presentation on the Past, Present, and Future of the Water District. There will be an opportunity to ask questions and receive information on the budget and recently passed parcel tax. The second guest speaker will be **Teresa Larkin, Chief Administrative Officer for First Alarm Security & Patrol, Inc.** Ms. Larkin will provide detailed information on a proposal for security patrols as well as additional security benefits First Alarm can provide to the VEP neighborhood. Focus will be on answering attendees' questions regarding the proposal. See article below for additional information on this proposal.

► **VEP Business Meeting/Updates/Announcements.** Members will be asked to elect the slate for the VEP Board of Directors.

► **Your Concerns and Ideas** – We want to hear from you! Together we can work toward positive resolution. This approach continues to make VEP neighborhoods strong, healthy, and attractive.

This will be an exciting and informative meeting. We look forward to seeing you, your friends and neighbors, on **May 28<sup>th</sup>**. This is the last scheduled meeting prior to Summer break. Please join us!

## April Meeting Synopsis

*by Marilyn Rodgers*

The April 30<sup>th</sup> meeting opened with announcements from President Marilyn Rodgers and several guests who had asked to address the membership. Guests included representatives from Assembly Speaker Pro Tempore, Nora Campos, 27<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, who dropped by to invite a representative to attend a Round Table meeting of neighborhood leaders. New VEP members Lisa Stapleton and Leslie Conte each had an announcement. Lisa had flyers and announced that Communitas, a Charter High School located on Pearl, is now enrolling grades 9, 10, & 11 for Fall 2013. Additional information can be obtained at 408/647-4441 or [www.whycommunitas.com](http://www.whycommunitas.com). Leslie, a Realtor, wanted to announce the winner of her gift certificate for the closest guess to a final selling price of a house that sold on Lassenpark Circle. She shared with attendees that the real estate market was rebounding with homes selling quickly, and... for above the asking price. Council Assistant Rayshelle

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Brant provided information on the success of the All American Litter Pickup event. She encouraged residents to attend the upcoming District 10 presentation of San Jose City Budget on Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Rodgers then quickly reminded attendees of the upcoming Annual Garage Sale on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Rodgers introduced the featured guest speaker for the evening, Santa Clara County Supervisor Mike Wasserman. She mentioned that there may be other guests dropping by as it was starting to be "election time". She indicated her appreciation of Mike as he had become a VEP member and participated in VEP meetings and events prior to his announcement to originally run for Supervisor.

The Supervisor told the audience that he was announcing his intention to run for a second term as Supervisor. He provided attendees with a printed copy of his January 2013 newsletter. This edition of his newsletter provided a concise overview of major projects and accomplishments. The Supervisor also shared a couple of items that he is particularly proud of – first that he had initiated a monthly newsletter and encouraged residents to subscribe. The current number of residents subscribing to his free newsletter is now over 25,000. If you would like to receive the e-distribution newsletter, go to the Supervisor's website at [www.supervisorwasserman.org](http://www.supervisorwasserman.org), then to the link "join our mailing list". Secondly he is pleased with the current number of elected officials who support him (a significant increase). He is also honored that his colleagues nominated him to serve as Vice-President of the Board of Supervisors for 2013. This puts him in line to be nominated to be President of the Board in 2014.

The second handout the Supervisor provided attendees was a card printed with important county services including corresponding contact telephone numbers. For anyone wishing a copy of this resource card, one can be obtained at any library (or through the Supervisor's office).

Supervisor Wasserman then provided a brief overview on the issue of homeless in the County and answered attendees questions and concerns. The issue of "Homelessness" is a complex one! Of concern to many attendees was fact that the City had disbanded an encampment close to San Jose Airport, with the result being many homeless persons moved to other areas of the City. An area of concern in the VEP neighborhood is that there has been an increase in homeless persons living along waterways. Attendees were interested in knowing what resources were available and who should be called for assistance. Waterways of course is the responsibility of the Santa Clara Water District. The Supervisor reviewed the County's role and responsibility as pertains to homeless persons. The County is responsible for coordinating social services for the homeless, with the lack of adequate housing being of primary concern. The County has launched a new housing program in part-

nership with Housing 1000. The 1.2 million dollar pilot program for housing the chronically homeless is modeled after similar programs that have been implemented successfully in other jurisdictions. The program saves taxpayer dollars while doing the right thing for our most vulnerable population.



Supervisor Wasserman also informed attendees that the Phase I Implementation Plan to begin developing Martial Cottle Park had come to the Board of Supervisors for approval on the consent calendar. The current timeline for work to begin in developing the perimeter trails around the park will be December 2013.

Marilyn thanked the Supervisor for his very informative presentation. She announced the next VEP membership meeting would be May 28<sup>th</sup>.

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## Gunderson High School

Rob Iverson, Activity Director



We are starting to wind down the year here at Gunderson High School. All of our spring sports have finished, and they have all had great seasons. Our track and field time will be sending several athletes to CCS finals.

Gunderson will be hosting our annual Athletic Awards ceremony on May 21<sup>st</sup>, at 6pm in our gym, where we will be celebrating all of the great achievements from this past school year, including the girls basketball team which took League Champion in their first year in the A League.

We will be holding our annual Academics Award ceremony on May 22, 7pm in our gym, where we will be recognizing all of the hard work by our dedicated students this past year. We will be recognizing students who have achieved GPA's of greater than 3.0, as well as awarding this years Valedictorian.

Gunderson will be saying good-bye to the Class of 2013 in the next few weeks. Senior finals are scheduled for May 28 – 30. Senior Awards night will be May 30, at 7pm in the theater. Graduation ceremony will be held on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 6pm at the Rose Gardens.

Finals for our remaining students will be on June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, where we will be on a modified testing schedule. As always, you can check out what his happening at <http://www.sjUSD.org/gunderson>, where you can view the activities calendar, see the latest Gunderson Live student news broadcasts, as well as visit our new web store where you can purchase all things Grizzly.

Until August 14<sup>th</sup>, have a great summer, and see everyone in the fall for another great year at Gunderson High School.

## What the Spring Fling Meant to GHS

By Angelica Morales, GHS Junior

Our first annual spring fling was a great example of a way our school is changing for the better, and the Gunderson campus



was bustling with PRIDE (the school's motto which stands for Personal responsibility, Respect, Integrity, Diversity, and Excellence). Walking around the event you saw a variety of different things: games, food, a live student band, and even a big

dodgeball tournament. The various grizzly clubs and sports teams hosted the event and worked together for the benefit of the school. The point of this event was not only to raise money but also to bring the community together and showcase the school. Being able to walk around and hear students say things like "this is actually really fun" and hearing laughter throughout the whole event made the day successful in showing our Grizzly PRIDE to the community.

## Security Patrols Program Proposal

by Marilyn Rodgers

Over the last several months, VEP members and residents have voiced concern over the increase in crimes such as vehicle break-ins and thefts, as well as the increase in home burglaries during the daylight hours. In addition, several of our neighborhood parks have been the victim of damage and illegal activity, particularly at night.

In response to this concern, VEP initiated several educational events. These events were intended to assist neighbors in being informed and knowledgeable about the issues, as well as what techniques have been found to be successful in reducing or preventing crime and criminal activity. (See VEP Newsletter editions for February, March, and April for additional information.) Many neighbors have already put the information and resources to work in increasing the safety of their homes and their neighborhood.

However, one option for improved safety and security which continues to be raised is that of private security patrols. This suggestion has been voiced by VEP members, and currently is being strongly considered by several of the other community associations that surround the VEP neighborhood.

First Alarm Security & Patrol, Inc. is bringing forward a proposal for member's consideration at the request of the Board of Directors. The intent of the proposal is to provide a reasonably priced option for additional resources aimed at individual household and neighborhood safety and crime reduction. This option would be available to all residents/households in the geographical VEP neighborhood. There will be a minimum requirement of approximately 15% of households participating for the program to go forward and be successful! The proposal includes a minimum of 8 comprehensive community patrols in a 24-hour period, seven days a week. (The number of patrols can increase upward to 24 in a 24-hour period, based on an increase in the number of participating households.) Patrols would target suspicious or unusual activity by persons and vehicles, and to provide safety and security for participating households. Depending on the number of households participating, the cost would range between \$20.00 to \$30.00 per month per household. Many additional benefits are also included such as: participating households will receive marked yard signage, 24/7 alarm response, vacation checks including newspaper pickup, and combination patrol/alarm monitoring package available at a discounted rate.

First Alarm works very closely with the San Jose Police Department.

**Please note:** First Alarm will be mailing a flyer to all households in the VEP neighborhood, the week prior to the May 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. Watch for this flyer as it provides additional details of the proposal. Encourage your neighbors to look for the flyer and to attend the May 28<sup>th</sup> meeting to have their questions answered!!

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**All American Litter Pickup**

by Marilyn Rodgers

On Saturday morning, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 18 volunteers met at Vista Park to sign in, have coffee, network with neighbors, obtain necessary supplies, and listen to instructions. They then proceeded to pick up litter, filling over 26 bags from around the VEP neighborhood! This was all accomplished in just over two hours!

Councilmember Johnny Khamis joined in the fun and visited with volunteers at four volunteer locations in District 10. This annual City event was certainly a success, as over 150 volunteers throughout District 10 participated in picking up litter, cleaning up brush and weeds, and planting trees! Thanks to Councilmember Khamis' staff who provided administrative assistance and refreshments.

"Thank you" to the following VEP area volunteers:



- Jim Hicks
- Josie Supencheck
- Bob and Francine Olsen
- Peggy and Bill Golden
- Dave and Aiko Fadness
- The Family VanTuyl – Amber, Lilly, Mathew, and Mike
- The Rowland Family – Brad, Ava, and Ashlynn
- Retina K. Edwin
- Bill Yanowsky
- Marilyn Rodgers

**Annual Neighborhood Garage Sale**

by Ginger Cardona, Helen Castillo, Marilyn Rodgers

The first Saturday in May is the VEP Annual Neighborhood Garage Sale. This year, the first Saturday in May was May 4<sup>th</sup>! The VEP Neighborhood-wide Garage Sale continues to be a popular community activity. VEP pays for the advertising in both print and electronic media (San Jose Mercury News, Penny Saver, Craigs List). Thanks to Board Member Helen Castillo for making arrangements for new banner signs that were placed in several locations in VEP to provide additional advertising for the garage sale.

Neighbors placed their treasures out for all to see – and then reaped in the fun and profit! Many residents had their neighbors join in – and put up their own street or cul-du-sac signs to entice garage sale hunters.

The Annual VEP Neighborhood Garage Sale has now been taking place continuously each year for over 10 years! If you were not able to participate this year....plan for next year. **It will always be scheduled for the first Saturday in May!**

**Thank you to retiring VEP Newsletter Editor, Susan Iverson**

The VEP Board of Directors wishes to thank Susan Iverson for her service to the VEP Community as the VEP Newsletter Editor for the last four years. Susan is looking forward to having additional time for family and business pursuits. Thanks again, Susan!



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## The President's Report – Review of VEP Goals and Objectives for 2012-2013

### Proposed VEP's 2012-2013 Goals & Objectives

1. Continue to improve our community and our association.
  - A. Encourage regular turn-over of VEP Board Directors to bring new ideas and energy to our organization and to assure broad membership representation.
  - B. Continue to maintain VEP's positive fiscal condition.
  - C. Continue to publish the VEP NEWS nine times per year. Improve and increase electronic communication, including use of the VEP website and e-mail.
  - D. Provide a variety of opportunities for volunteer service that reflect member-endorsed projects and improvements within our community.
2. Promote community interaction, pride, and preparedness.
  - A. Promote and encourage member participation in neighborhood safety programs, crime prevention, and disaster/emergency preparedness.
  - B. Organize and encourage "adoption" and active participation in cleanup and maintenance of public areas within our community.
  - C. Sponsor and promote (election, holiday, educational, social) events for our membership area.
  - D. Encourage and acknowledge outstanding volunteer service by students and VEP members.
3. Partner with government and local businesses to create and maintain high-quality public services for the VEP area.
  - A. Work with government and businesses to improve and maintain public landscaping and city parks.
  - B. Work with government to provide traffic safety and uncongested conditions on VEP area streets and roads.
    - a. Continue to work with the city and Erikson Neighborhood Association to formally adopt a Thornwood Drive terminus for any crossing of the Guadalupe River easterly from Almaden Expressway.
    - b. Seek real improvements in traffic level of service at the Capitol/Narvaez/northbound 87 onramp.
    - c. Ensure that impacts of any proposed development along the Guadalupe Corridor are fully mitigated.
    - d. Continue VEP involvement in proposed revisions to the configuration of Branham Lane between Snell and Narvaez.
  - C. Participate in and react to any plans for urban development, services, and public infrastructure (Urban Village at Capitol/Narvaez and Almaden Ranch).
  - D. Continue to monitor, participate and react to the design planning and initial development of Martial-Cottle Regional Park (the Lester Property).
  - E. Work with City to support interior maintenance of Vista Park Community Room.
  - F. Monitor opportunities to build a city park at Capitol/Narvaez

## President's Report

by Marilyn Rodgers

Another year is coming to completion for VEP. Three years ago the decision was made to consolidate our annual Goals and Objectives. However, some specific goals are carried forward even though a specific issue may not be addressed in any given calendar year. This provides the Board of Directors the authority to act on the membership's behalf, particularly in between meetings or during summer break. Many of the issues listed under Goal 3 fall into this category.

We continue to be pleased and proud that VEP's financial health is stable and strong. This is due to the very loyal support of members and advertisers.

During each of the last two years, the Board of Directors has replaced two members each year. This amount of change allows for new ideas and enthusiasm while providing a balance of new board members with experienced board members.

Members indicate they appreciate receiving the VEP newsletter nine times per year, as well as having the option to receive either a mailed hardcopy or an e-distribution newsletter. The Board continues to look for ways to utilize additional electronic communications. In addition to e-mails and the VEP website, VEP offers a private Facebook account for members. Also, members can join Nextdoor. Nextdoor, a social network, has partnered with the City of San Jose with the goal of improving communication to neighborhoods.

This year, the VEP goal of promoting and encouraging member participation in neighborhood safety, crime prevention, and disaster/emergency preparedness took on a very high priority. In response to concern about the rise in certain types of criminal activity and the decrease in resources for public safety, VEP initiated several educational events to inform and empower members and residents. While the majority of these presentations were offered during the scheduled 9 membership meetings per year, several were special events. Topics included two different presentations on the use of video camera surveillance, one on Neighborhood Watch, a forum with newly elected City Councilmember Johnny Khamis and a representative of the San Jose Police Department, and participation in the first annual Safety Faire at Gunderson High School, sponsored by Councilmember Khamis's office.

To assist residents in learning skills that would be helpful to them in an emergency/disaster, VEP sponsored two CPR classes. One class provided the full range of skills including a two year certification for participants; the second class – "hands only" CPR was an abbreviated class that is being encouraged by the American Heart Association to provide this valuable life-saving skill to as many citizens as possible. These classes were well attended and enthusiastically received.

Additional educational opportunities were provided with an Election Forum for the final two candidates for District 10 Council seat, a presentation on the development status and timelines for the Martial Cottle Park, a presentation from VTA staff on Toll Lanes, and an overview presentation from Santa Clara County Supervisor Wasserman on County issues affecting members, which highlighted issues of concern regarding homeless persons in the County.

Social events continued to be a highlight for members. These

included the very popular Santa in the Park, the Holiday Decorations contest, the annual Neighborhood Garage Sale, and an Ice Cream Social held in January this year.

Beautification and cleanup projects this year underscored the opportunity and importance of collaborating with interested partner groups. VEP volunteers pruned over half of the Palm Trees along Chynoweth. Projects were completed with Gunderson students at Gunderson and along Chynoweth and Hwy 87. Partners included Our City Forest, San Jose City Parks & Rec, and Cal Trans. VEP volunteers also participated in the City sponsored annual All American Litter Pickup.

## Report Street Lights Needing Repair

By Marilyn Rodgers

Good lighting does deter criminal activity in the neighborhood. Have you noticed one or more street lights that have gone dark? If so, the City depends on residents to report this. You can report it either by calling into a voicemail recording or by going online to complete an e-mail report.

For either method please have the following information:

1. The Street Light Pole number - **number** is located at approximately eye level.
2. The name of the street and address (or other info, such as southwest corner of Street X)
3. Nearest cross street
4. Your name and daytime phone number

To **Call in** and leave a voicemail message – call **408-277-5517**

To report by **going online** – go to [sanjoseca.gov](http://sanjoseca.gov), then to Department of Transportation, then Street Light Repairs – and provide the above information via e-mail as indicated.

The timeline for repair is usually 7 to 14 days. If additional repair work is needed, for instance if the copper wiring has been stolen, the repair of the street light will be delayed.

## Stay Informed, Sign up for AlertSCC

Marilyn Rodgers

A few weeks ago, you may have been surprised to have received an “alert” regarding a stolen vehicle with a small child inside it. Santa Clara County initiated its **AlertSCC system** to notify residents to be on the look out for the vehicle and report it.

This is a system that can be utilized for any disaster or emergency situation. It is free to residents. If you would like to be notified in the event of an emergency in our area, you just have to sign up for it. To sign up online, to go [www.alertSCC.com](http://www.alertSCC.com). You can request the information be sent to your mobile device, to your e-mail, or to your home land-phone.

This is another opportunity to be informed and to be prepared!

## Does VEP have your current e-mail address?

Unfortunately some of our members did not receive all of their newsletters or e-mails this past year, when they forgot to let us know of the change. You are very important to us, so please put VEP on your notification list when you update or change addresses. E-mail is also the primary communication tool used during months that newsletters are not published.

## Communication with Our Members

by Marilyn Rodgers, Adina Pierce, Susan Iverson

Face to face communication is usually the most meaningful and rewarding. Monthly membership meetings between September and May, special events and projects provide this opportunity. However, we have many non-face to face opportunities as well – they are as follows:

As you are reading this newsletter, you already know about our Number 1 (and most popular) way to communicate with our members – through the **VEP NEWS**. Our members continue to tell us how much they enjoy receiving and reading the newsletter.

We continue to evaluate and utilize electronic means of communicating with our members, particularly in between editions of the newsletter (remember **e-distribution of the newsletter** is available upon request as well).

**E-mail alerts** – if you have e-mail and would like to receive monthly e-mail Alerts, please be sure we have a current e-mail address. (We usually send one or two e-mails per month, so we will not fill your mailbox with junk e-mails; and e-mail addresses are confidential).

**VEP Website** – [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net) – find current information, highlights of upcoming events, as well as historical information on the website. Our website is intended for use by both members and non-members. Look for an increasing amount of information to be available on the website in the future.

**VEP - Yahoo groups and Facebook** – for those members interested in additional electronic access and use “social media” sites, VEP has a new “private” Facebook account, available to VEP members only. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/vepca/>

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## Another Successful Gunderson Project

By Dave Fadness

On a beautiful Saturday morning, April 27, eighty-four enthusiastic student volunteers and a dozen adult community members teamed to beautify an unfinished area on the east side of the Gunderson High School campus. We spread 100 cubic yards of colored wood chips and planted four trees. Having had a very productive day, I believe everyone who participated left feeling tired, but with an earned sense of pride and accomplishment—the finished site looks great (go see it for yourself).

Thanks are well-deserved by all participants; their dedication and hard work made this project a complete success.

As usual, Gunderson's Career & College Counselor **Stephanie Heuer** provided willing assistance in recruiting student volunteers, adult supervision on workday and brought snacks and bottled water for our volunteers. She is an excellent resource for both Gunderson students and our community. Lead by President **Brian Trat**, extraordinary *Interact Club* students planted the trees and have accepted a three-year watering and maintenance commitment for their care.

Without the generosity of these two generous local companies this project would simply not have been possible:

The four trees, stakes, and planting materials were donated by **Our City Forest**, a non-profit whose mission is to create a beautiful, green, and healthy Silicon Valley. (Please support them with if you can.) OCF's Tree Amigo, **Michael Cynkar** was on hand to demonstrate proper planting technique and to assist students in planting the trees. Working with Gunderson students, we've planted 27 trees on and around the Gunderson campus this year.

**Republic Services Recyclery** donated the 100 cubic yards of wood chips and their delivery--a gift worth thousands of dollars. Two caring gentlemen, General Manager **Gil Cheso** and Organics Operations Manager **Glenn Bohling** were a pleasure to work with.

Others that provided invaluable assistance are **Steve Adamo**, and **Nick Nakao**; in particular, Mr. Nakao and his team worked hard (as did our neighbors) to have wheelbarrows, shovels, and rakes on hand when we started that morning. Gunderson Groundskeeper **David Gonzalez** also helped to make our day a success. A representative of County Supervisor **Mike Wasserman** was there to present certificates of recognition and SJUSD Trustee **Veronica Lewis** attended to cheer us on.

Special thanks to the following neighbors for their equipment, supervision, and help that day: **Bob & Irene Shoberg** (provided a wheelbarrow and shovel), **Bill & Peggy Golden** (brought a wheelbarrow and tools with them), **Victor & Sherry Goodrum** (brought tools with them), **Bob Aquino** (brought tools with him), **Ellen Finch** (provided two wheelbarrows), **Rodger Alsobrook** (brought two wheelbarrows and tools with him), **Debra Suydam** (brought a wheelbarrow with her), **Dennis Nitschke** (brought a wheelbarrow with him), **Bill Johnson** (brought a wheelbarrow and tools with him), **Frank Kistler** (brought a wheelbarrow and tools with him), **Walt & Jeri Arstingstall** (planted a street tree and helped spread chips), **Joanne Liddy** (provided two wheelbarrows), **Alan & Ginger Cardona** (provided a wheelbarrow and tools), and **Scott &**

**Dianne Conry** (provided a wheelbarrow and tools).

We ended up with an unclaimed bow rake and square-nosed

shovel. They don't have anyone's name on them. If you or someone you know is looking for one or both of these items, contact me at (408) 578-6428.

It was a pleasure to work with community and Gunderson student volunteers on yet another successful project, our last for this school year.

## Tomatoes For You

By John Marks

Growing tomato plants is easy, and the rewards are well worth the effort. Nothing beats your own vine-ripened beauties. You'll probably wish you had planted more.

Experiment first with just a few plants; each one can produce 10 to 15 lbs. of fruit. To get the best results with the least effort, purchase seedlings from a local nursery at planting time--after the last expected frost. Choose plants with straight, stocky stems about 6- to 10-in. tall.

Plant tomatoes in well-drained soil where they will receive sun all day long. When planting, work a complete fertilizer, such as 5-10-10 or 5-20-20, into the upper 6 in. of soil, following package directions. Space plants 24 to 36 in. apart. Plan to plant no later than the end of May, and expect the plant to set blossoms only after the night time temperature stays above 55 deg. Remove the plant from its container, pinch off the lower leaves and set it in a deep planting hole so the roots and stem are buried up to the first set of leaves. Roots will form along the buried portion of the stem, resulting in a strong plant.

Stake or cage the plant soon after planting so as not to disturb the developing roots later. Tie plants to their support as they grow. As the plants gain in height, pinch off the lower branches; these are called bleeders because they suck moisture and nutrients from the main plant, but produce nothing. A well-pruned tomatoe plant is stronger and more productive.

Water through the entire growing season to keep the soil moist, and fertilize regularly. Depending on variety, you can expect red, ripe tomatoes as soon as six weeks after planting. You'll be proud.

If you have tomatoes in planters or pots, the vines may begin to die at the bottom about the time the fruit begins to ripen, and soon the whole vine is dead. This is a classic symptom for verticillium wilt (can you pronounce that?), a common soil disease in our area. There is no chemical cure, and this disease is persistent in local soil; once present, it can last for about 20 years, I am told.



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## A Year of Bread

By Kathy Wood, Baker  
[ayearofbreads.blogspot.com](http://ayearofbreads.blogspot.com)

"Achoo...hooooooonk!" These are the most often heard sound effects found in homes and public places this time of the year. Spring is when everything awakens from its slumber to produce new leaves, beautiful flowers and the not-so-wonderful POLLEN. For allergy sufferers, Spring is painful-to the nose, the ears, the throat, and everything in between.



There are a lot of allergy medications available today and the secret I've found is to find one that reduces the sneezing fits, slows the nose flow, but still allows one to function on a normal basis. I have taken some pills that make me feel like a zombie (probably look like one, too), and zombies shouldn't drive or operate machinery (even things without a motor). Finding the perfect balance can be a trial and error operation.

Have you noticed how everything gets blamed on "allergies" this time of the year? My big toe hurts-must be allergies; I forgot to feed the dog-must be allergies; I ran right through that red light-must be allergies (the police don't see this as a viable excuse). Knowing when to stop taking these medications is another problem. I've found reducing the intake to every other day for a week or two then maybe just once or twice a week before you can push those pills to the back of the medicine cabinet until next year.

I can't promise baking this bread will give one any relief from their allergies, but you might as well eat something good to ease the suffering some (even if you can't smell it).

### **Almond-Studded Chocolate Loaf**

**Ingredients:** 2 cups all-purpose flour, ¼ cup baking cocoa, 2 teaspoons baking powder, ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon baking soda, 1 egg, 1 cup 2% milk, ¾ cup packed dark brown sugar, 1/3 cup canola oil, ½ teaspoon almond extract, 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons chopped almonds, divided, ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons miniature semisweet chocolate chips, divided.

**Instructions:** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine the flour, cocoa, baking powder, salt and baking soda. In a small bowl, whisk egg, milk, brown sugar, oil and extract. Stir into the dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in 1 cup almonds and ¾ cup chocolate chips.

Spoon into a greased 9x5-inch loaf pan. Sprinkle with remaining almonds and chips. Bake in preheated 350 degree oven for 55-60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack. (2013 Taste of Home Annual Recipes, 2012 Reiman Media Group, LLC, pg 92, presented by Lisa Varner, El Paso, TX).

"Rolling in the Dough!"

## Annual Election of VEP Board of Directors

by Jeri Arstingstall and Marilyn Rodgers

May is the annual VEP business meeting which includes the election of a slate of members who will serve as the Board of Directors. The Bylaws require that the names of members be included in a slate, and then be forwarded to the membership for election at the May meeting. Notice of a list of members running on the slate for Board of Directors is accomplished by publishing the slate in advance in the May VEP Newsletter.

Jeri Arstingstall, a VEP Past President, was the Nominating Chairperson this year. The slate of members running for the VEP Board of Directors is as follows:

Ginger Cardona  
Helen Castillo  
Katherine Decker  
Arul Edwin  
Peggy Golden  
Adina Pierce  
Marilyn Rodgers  
Rachel Witmeyer will be the new VEP Newsletter Editor

Once the membership elects the Board of Directors, the Board then elects officers, i.e. President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary. The Board also appoints members to fill any open/unfilled positions which may occur between election cycles.

## Fatal Accident in VEP Neighborhood – Bluefield Drive

by Marilyn Rodgers

On May 14<sup>th</sup> at approximately 3:30pm, a vehicle travelling on Bluefield Drive, hit a woman and two children. The accident happened very close to the Parkview School. Sadly, one of the children - a seven year old girl, died. The driver of the vehicle involved in the accident, stopped to help, and cooperated with police. As of this writing, additional information is not available. The investigation of the accident is ongoing.

A reminder to all - to please be especially cautious on our busy residential streets. Two of our streets, Bluefield and Hyde Park have neighborhood parks along them, with Bluefield also having an elementary school – Parkview. Drivers, please slow down and be especially careful when passing parks or schools as there is more pedestrian traffic in these areas. Residents, particularly when walking with children or pets, be especially alert to the possibility of oncoming cars when crossing streets in and around the schools or parks.....as drivers may not be able to see you. Please be safe, and encourage our neighbors to do the same!!

## Condolences to the Aileen Quiroz Family

The VEP Board of Directors, on behalf of the VEP Community, send our sympathy to the Quiroz family, their friends, and neighbors on Bluefield Drive.

For those that would like to assist the family financially with funeral and medical expenses, the San Jose Police Officers Association is accepting donations on behalf of the family. Go to [www.sjpoa.com](http://www.sjpoa.com), and then you can direct your charitable donation go to the family of Aileen Quiroz, Victims Assistance Fund.



# VEP Community Calendar

## May / June 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Memorial Day 	28 VEP Commu- nity Meeting— 7:30 PM— Vista Park Community Room	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 Flag Day 	15
16 Father's Day 	17	18	19	20	21	22

### Dates to Remember!

VEP Community Meetings  
May 28, 2013

Community Events

# THE VEP NEWS



## VEP Community Association

P.O. Box 18111 San Jose, CA 95158

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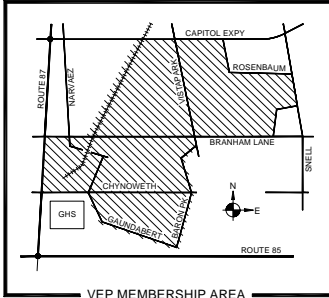
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### VEP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Prefer your newsletter via Email?  
Let us know at [vep@vepca.net](mailto:vep@vepca.net).



Check our website: [www.vepca.net](http://www.vepca.net)

Community Room

Vista Park

in the  
7:30 pm

Be sure to attend  
VEP's  
May 28th Meeting